

R E A S O N S

Humbly offered to the Honorable

HOUSE of COMMONS,

By the Free Traders of ENGLAND,

Against the IMPOSITION desired by the Creditors of the *Hamborough-Company*, to be laid on all Goods coming from any Part between the *Schau* and *Callice*, for the Discharging of the said Company's Debts.

1. **T**HAT we are informed, that the said Debt was Contracted by reason of great sums of Moneys lent and given to our former Kings, or their Ministers, and to those in Authority in the Times of the late Troubles, for the Maintaining of their Patent, which was then called into question, as prejudicial to the Trade, but especially to the Manufactory of the Nation.
2. Wherefore we judge it unreasonable, that all *German, Flemish, and Holland Goods*, brought in by others his Majesties Subjects, that are not of the said Company, should be charged towards the payment of those Debts which were Contracted by the said Company, for their particular advantage only.
3. By this Artifice, the said Company do tacitely insinuate themselves into a kind of owning or approving of their Patent by Parliament; which we humbly conceive, not to be the intention of this Honorable House: but on the contrary, we hope the Parliament will look upon it as a Monopoly, and judge it prejudicial to the Nation, to have their Patent owned by which they pretend a Right to be the Sole Exporters of our Woollen Manufactory, to the places within their Patent; which doubtless they will put in Execution, with the utmost Rigor, if once their Patent comes to be owned by Parliament.
4. But, if besides this, they could so settle their Patent, as to have the Sole Importation of all manner of Goods, out of the Countreys mentioned in their Patent, which hitherto hath been Free for all men, we humbly desire the Honorable House of Commons, to consider the prejudice the Nation would receive thereby: for, if one Company, how great or numerous soever, have the sole Exportation of our Manufactory to so considerable a part of the World; and the sole Importation of all Commodities from so considerable a part of the World, they may by their BY-LAWS so Combine together, as to buy our Manufactory at as low a Rate, and to sell the Commodities they port, at as high a Rate as they please, and so Enrich themselves, to the Impoverishing of the Nation.
5. But, to shew that the Imposition it self is of prejudice to the Nation, in regard it would be too tedious to instance in all Commodities, we will only instance in that one Commodity of Linnen: All linnen from *Germany, Holland, and Flanders*, have already very high Customs and Duties laid upon them, amounting in some sorts to 20. in some to 15. in some to 12. *per Cent.* and those that pay least pay above 10. *per Cent.* of the value which is much higher than the Duties on any other sort of Linnen, and in particular the French Linnen; Whereas most of the Linnens from *Germany, Flanders and Holland* are bought with the product of our Manufactory, and ought therefore to be the more encouraged; whereas, on the contrary, most (if not all the French Linnens are bought with ready Mony, and are not the Returns of the product of our Manufactory, in regard the French King hath laid so great an Imposition on our Manufactory, that hardly any of it is transported into *France*.
6. But, if yet more Impositions be laid on those Linnens, it will more increase the Importation of French Linnens, and consequently more enrich *France*, and more obstruct the bringing in of Linnens from *Germany, Holland and Flanders*, and consequently the Consumption of our Manufactory: For if they cannot vend the Linnen, they cannot buy our Manufactory: but on the contrary, as they find the Linnen Manufactures to decay, they will be necessitated to fall upon making Woollen Manufactures, and will in time need none of ours.
7. This new Imposition would diminish his Majesties Customs, for about $\frac{1}{4}$ of the Linnen that come from *Germany, Flanders and Holland*, are again Exported, to *Ireland*, to the *Canaries*, and to other Western Islands, and to our Colonies and Plantations in the *West Indies*, upon which, when so Exported, his Majesty doth Retain *declared* the Customs: now if this new Imposition be laid upon them, the Duties will be so high, that there can be none Exported, but the above mentioned places will be furnished at cheaper Rates from *Holland, Hamburg and Flanders*, and consequently his Majesty will lose all that part of the Customs, which he now keeps of the said Linnens, which after Importation are again Exported. Now in regard there will be scarce any Exportation, because the Duties will be so exceeding high it will be worth the while to run them on Shore, and so defraud his Majesty of the whole Custom, to the great diminution of his Majesties Revenue; whereas at present, because half the Custom and the whole Additional Duty is returned at the Exportation, no man endeavours to save Custom, because he then loses that benefit at the Exportation.
8. We humbly desire the Honorable House of Commons to consider whether if they make a President of paying this Companies Debts, it may not become the Case of the Companies of *London*, who have borrowed Moneys upon their Common Seal, and of all Corporations, and the Chamber of *London* it self, and whether the Bankers and others that have lent, and may hereafter lend vast Sums of Money, may not hope for the like Favour? the consequences of which the Honorable House of Commons will be best able to judge.
9. To lay a Tax upon Goods, would make all men leave of their Trades in the Company, and drive their Trade in *Dutch Burrows*, or in some Marts or Towns as are out of the Company's Priviledges.
10. This very Debt, was, by a Committee of the House of Commons, 21. *Feb.* Voted to be fully satisfied, and a Sum over and above, and the Charter of the *Hamborough Company* a Grievance, both in the Creation and Execution of it; and will the Parliament in their Legislative own to make that good by an Act.